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REMARKS

This response is filed as a full and timely response to the final Official Action mailed June 20, 2006. Reconsideration of the application in light of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim Status:

Various claims are amended by the present paper to clarify the claim language. Claim 7 has been cancelled previously. Claim 30 is cancelled in the present paper without prejudice or disclaimer. No new claims are added. Thus, claims 1-6, 8-29 and 31 are currently pending for further action.

Prior Art:

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1, 4-6, 11, 13-16, 26, 27 and 29-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the teachings of U.S. Patent No. 6,973,589 to Wright et al. ("Wright") taken alone. For at least the following reasons, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites

A computer network for providing services comprising:
a plurality of computing elements each of which comprises computing resources for supporting one or more electronic services, wherein said services are controlled or operated by commands or data transmitted via email;
a mail server for receiving and routing email; and
a redirector, separate from said mail server, communicatively connected to said mail server and each of said computing elements, wherein said redirector receives email from said mail server, wherein each e-mail contains a command or data for a specific said service, with or without being addressed to a specific computing element, and wherein said redirector is configured to selectively match an available computing element with a specific service request of an incoming e-mail and forward at least a portion of the email to that computing element so as to deliver said command or data

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to that specific service, such that said redirector serves as an email proxy for said plurality of computing elements;
wherein said electronic services are controlled by said email routed by said redirector among said plurality of computing elements.

Independent claim 26 similarly recites:

A computer network for providing electronic services comprising:
a plurality of computing elements each of which comprises computing resources for supporting one or more electronic services, wherein said services can be controlled or executed by commands or data transmitted via email;
a mail server for receiving and routing email; and
a redirector, separate from said mail server, communicatively connected to said mail server and each of said computing elements, wherein said redirector receives email from said mail server, wherein each e-mail contains a command or data for a specific said service, with or without being addressed to a specific computing element, and wherein said redirector is configured to selectively match an available computing element with a specific service request of an incoming e-mail and forward at least a portion of the email to that computing element so as to deliver said command or data to that specific service, such that said redirector serves as an email proxy for said plurality of computing elements; and
a service handler on at least one of said computing elements for automatically obtaining an electronic service using an incoming email and installing that service on the computing element corresponding to the service handler.

In contrast, Wright fails to teach or suggest most of the elements of claims 1 and 26.

In fact, Wright appears to be almost entirely inapplicable to Applicant's claims.

Specifically, Wright fails to teach or suggest the claimed "plurality of computing elements." In this regard, the Office Action refers to the power system (107) taught by Wright. (Action of 6/20/06, p. 2). However, a power system is neither a plurality of elements nor a computing element. It is entirely unclear how the Action can confuse a power system with a computing element.

As recited in claim 1, each of the plurality of computing elements "comprises computing resources for supporting one or more electronic services." Wright does not teach or suggest that the power system (107) includes computing resources for supporting one or more electronic services. One of skill in the art would not confuse Wright's power system

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(107) with a computing element having computing resources for supporting one or more electronic services.

Claim 1 further recites a mail server for receiving and routing email, and a redirector that receives email from the mail server and “serves as an email proxy for said plurality of computing elements.” In this regard, the Action refers to Wright’s electronic mailbox (220) as the claimed mail server and Wright’s intelligent electronic device (“IED”) (105) as the claimed redirector. (Action of 6/20/06, p. 3). However, the electronic mailbox (220) is part of and is the email functionality of the intelligent electronic device (105). (See Wright, Fig. 2, element 105 inclusive of element 220). Thus, the Action is actually referring to the same device twice when construing the electronic mailbox (220) of Wright. In reality, Wright fails to teach or suggest the functionality of both the claimed mail server *and* the claimed redirector that serves as an email proxy for said plurality of computing elements.

Claim 1 further recites “wherein said redirector receives email from said mail server, wherein each e-mail contains a command or data for a specific said [electronic] service, with or without being addressed to a specific computing element, and wherein said redirector is configured to selectively match an available computing element with a specific service request of an incoming e-mail and forward at least a portion of the email to that computing element so as to deliver said command or data to that specific service, such that said redirector serves as an email proxy for said plurality of computing elements.” This subject matter is not taught or suggested by Wright.

In this regard, the Office Action has argued that there is no patentable significance to the “plurality” of computing elements recited in claim 1. According to the Office Action, “it has been held obvious to duplicate elements for multiple effects.” (Action of 6/20/06, p. 4). This argument is entirely misplaced and evidences a failure to understand what Applicant is

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actually claiming. Applicant is not merely citing a plurality of computing elements that perform a duplicate function. Rather, Applicant recites a single email redirector that takes in to account and manages a plurality of computing resources to optimize the services provided to users. If there were no plurality of computing resources, there would be no reason to have a redirector that serves as a proxy for the plurality of resources and that is "configured to selectively match an available computing element with a specific service request of an incoming e-mail and forward at least a portion of the email to that computing element so as to deliver said command or data to that specific service." Thus, Wright does not teach or suggest the claimed relationship between the redirector and the "plurality" of computing elements.

Wright further does not teach or suggest the claimed redirector that receives email, "wherein each e-mail contains a command or data for a specific said service." Wright does not teach or suggest email that contains a command or data that is specific to a particular electronic service. Wright only teaches email regarding the operation of a single power system (107).

Wright further does not teach or suggest "e-mail [that] contains a command or data for a specific said service, *with or without being addressed to a specific computing element.*" Wright only teaches incoming email that is addressed specifically to the IED (105). Wright does not teach or suggest a the claimed redirector that handles email with or without that email being addressed to a specific computing element.

Wright further does not teach or suggest a redirector "configured to selectively match an available computing element with a specific service request of an incoming e-mail and forward at least a portion of the email to that computing element so as to deliver said command or data to that specific service, such that said redirector serves as an email proxy

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for said plurality of computing elements.” There is no element in the Wright system that performs anything approximating this functionality. The IED (105) sends/receives email only for the single power system (107). The power source (107) contains no computing resources.

Moreover, Wright only teaches email that provides commands for the IED. Wright does not teach or suggest email that provides a command or data for the power system (107). Consequently, Wright fails to teach or suggest a redirector that “forward[s] at least a portion of the email to that computing element so as to deliver said command or data to that specific service, such that said redirector serves as an email proxy for said plurality of computing elements.” Wright fails to teach or suggest that “said electronic services are controlled by said email routed by said redirector among said plurality of computing elements.”

In short, Wright is entirely inapplicable to the claimed subject matter and fails to teach or suggest most of the features of claims 1 and 26. “To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974).” M.P.E.P. § 2143.03. Accord. M.P.E.P. § 706.02(j). For these many reasons, the rejection based on Wright of claims 1 and 26 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Independent claim 11 recites:

A method of providing services with a computer network that comprises a plurality of computing elements each of which comprise computing resources for supporting one or more services that are controlled or operated by commands or data received via email, and a redirector, communicatively connected to each of said computing elements; said method comprising:

receiving an e-mail message, said message containing a command or data configured for a specific service on one of said computing elements, wherein said e-mail message relates to said specific service, with or without being addressed to a specific computing element; and

routing at least some of said e-mail message comprising said command or data to a corresponding computing element to control or execute said specific service, such

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that said redirector serves as an e-mail proxy for said computing elements, wherein said redirector determines which computing element receives said command or data from said e-mail message based on the specific service to which that e-mail message relates.

In contrast, as demonstrated above, Wright fails to teach or suggest "receiving an e-mail message, said message containing a command or data configured for a specific service on one of said [plurality of] computing elements, wherein said e-mail message relates to said specific service, with or without being addressed to a specific computing element." Wright further fails to teach or suggest "routing at least some of said e-mail message comprising said command or data to a corresponding computing element to control or execute said specific service, such that said redirector serves as an e-mail proxy for said computing elements, wherein said redirector determines which computing element receives said command or data from said e-mail message based on the specific service to which that e-mail message relates."

Wright fails to teach or suggest any of this subject matter recited in claim 11. For at least these reasons, the rejection of claim 11 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

The various dependent claims of the application recite further subject matter that is not taught or suggested by Wright. Specific, non-exclusive examples follow.

Claim 4 recites "said redirector comprises a service handler for extracting an access function from incoming email messages; and said service handler complies with said extracted access function by transmitting commands or data to at least one of said plurality of computing elements supporting said services." Claim 13 recites similar subject matter. In contrast, as demonstrated above, the IED (105) of Wright receives commands via email for *itself*. It does not include a service handler that extracts an access function from an incoming email and complies with the access function by *transmitting commands or data* to one of a

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plurality of computing elements supporting a variety of electronic services. Wright is entirely inapplicable to claims 4 and 13.

Claim 5 recites "wherein said commands or data comprises a service." Claims 14 and 27 recites similar subject matter. Wright does not teach or suggest extracting a service from an email and transmitting that service to one of a plurality of computing elements. Claim 27 specifically recites a service handle *on of the computing elements* that receives an email from the redirector and extracts a service from that email. Wright does not teach or suggest this subject matter.

Claim 6 recites "wherein said commands or data comprises a specified location where a service can be accessed." Claim 15 recites similar subject matter. Wright does not teach or suggest this subject matter.

Claim 31 recites "a separate service handler on each of said plurality of computing components." Wright does not teach or suggest this subject matter. Moreover, the Office Action fails to indicate how or where Wright teaches a plurality of computing elements each having a separate service handler.

For at least these additional reasons, the rejection based on Wright of these dependent claims should be further reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 2, 3, 8, 9, 12, 17, 18, 21-25 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the combined teachings of Wright and U.S. Patent No. 5,819,110 to Motoyama ("Motoyama"). This rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the same reasons given above with respect to the independent claims.

Additionally, claim 2 recites "each of said plurality of computing elements comprises a service handler; and said service handler on a computing element extracts an access

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function from an incoming email message and complies with said extracted access function.” Similar subject matter is recited in claim 12. As applied to claim 1, the Action considers the power system (107) of Wright as representing the claimed “plurality of computing elements.” (Action of 6/20/06, p. 2). Consequently, the Action is now apparently suggesting that Motoyama suggests that a service handler that extracts access functions from an incoming email message and complies with that extracted access function be added to the power system (107) of Wright. This is unreasonable. One of skill in the art would not be lead by Wright and Motoyama to install a service handler in a power system, assuming that were even somehow possible to do.

“The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1420 (Fed. Cir. 1990).” M.P.E.P. § 2143.01. For at least this additional reason, the rejection of claims 2 and 12 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claim 8 recites: “a firewall through which said email messages are received, said mail server and redirector both being protected within a common firewall.” Claim 17 recites similar subject matter. In this regard, the Office Action takes “Official Notice” “that both the concept and advantages of providing for a firewall to protect the email processing center is well known.” (Action of 6/20/06, p. 8). However, claim 8 does not merely recite a firewall, but that both a server and redirector and defined and claimed by Applicant are protected within a common firewall. This subject matter has not been shown to be taught or suggested by the prior art of record.

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"The examiner may take official notice of facts outside of the record which are capable of instant and unquestionable demonstration as being "well-known" in the art. *In re Ahlert*, 424 F. 2d 1088, 165 USPQ 418, 420 (CCPA 1970). . . . If the applicant traverses such an assertion the examiner should cite a reference in support of his or her position." M.P.E.P § 2144.03. Consequently, Applicant hereby requests that prior art actually teaching the features of claims 8 and 17 be introduced into the record or that the rejection of claims 8 and 17 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claim 9 recites "further comprising a web client within said firewall communicating with said redirector to obtain access to said services." Claim 18 recites similar subject matter. Again, Wright and Motoyama fail to teach or suggest this subject matter, and the Office Action fails to clearly indicate how or where the prior art teaches or suggests this subject matter. Thus, Applicant again requests that prior art actually teaching the features of claims 9 and 18 be introduced into the record or that the rejection of claims 9 and 18 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 10, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the combined teaching of Wright, Motoyama and U.S. Patent No. 6,480,901 to Weber et al. ("Weber"). This rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the same reasons given above with respect to the independent claims.

Additionally, claim 10 recites "wherein said redirector generates web pages related to said services for said web client." Claims 19 and 20 dependent, respectively from claims 18 and 11, and recite: "generating web pages for a [said] web client with said redirector, said web pages being related to said services."

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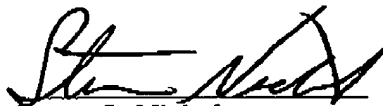
In this regard, the Action cites to Weber at Fig. 7 and col. 14, lines 23-41. (Action of 6/20/06, p. 9). However, these portions of Weber do not teach or suggest a redirector, as disclosed and claimed, that generates web pages relating to the services provided on a plurality of connected computing elements for which the redirector serves as an email proxy. For at least this additional reason, the rejection of claims 10, 19 and 20 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion:

For the foregoing reasons, the present application is thought to be clearly in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of the application in light of these remarks is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions which could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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